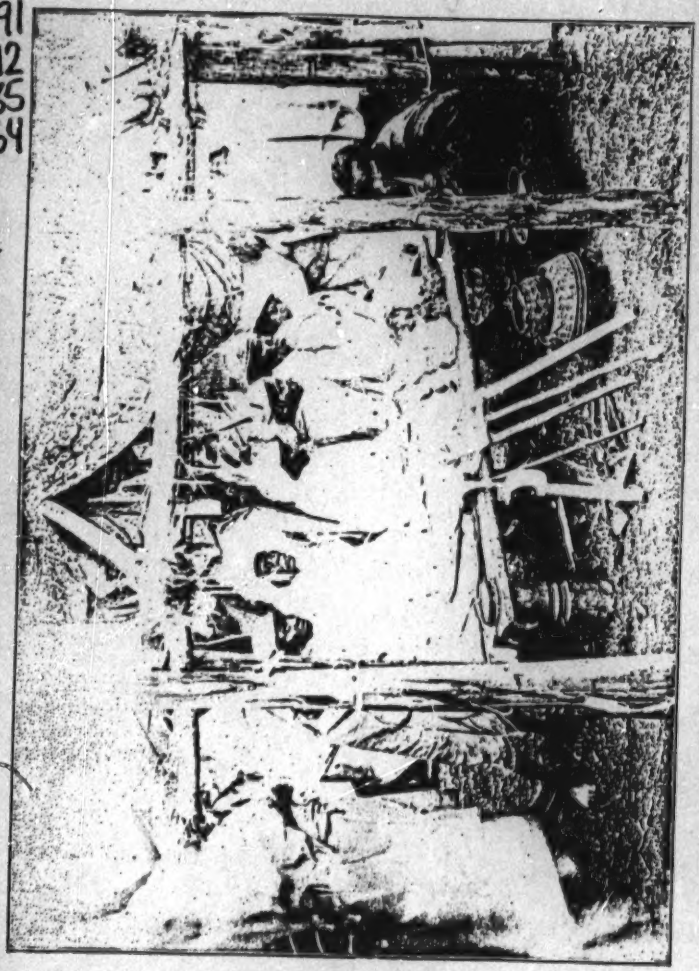
1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

291
412
285
764



BADAGA FUNERAL CAR WITH THE CORPSE.

[facing p. 117]

basket and goes to the bank of the stream, facing toward the sun. In one hand he holds a pot. The rest of the men do likewise, taking care to stand downstream from the leader. Each has a handful of salt and a pot, and each wears a cotton shawl which leaves the entire right arm bare.

The leader (usually prompted in a whisper by some one else who knows it better) then pronounces the following prayer (pausing at the end of each line, whereupon the rest of the party repeats the last word in lieu of saying the entire line over):

O Lord [Swami], we today celebrate things as our
fathers, grandfathers and forefathers have done.
Old is not new, and new is not old [i.e., old things
are not neglected, nor new things added].
Whatever we sow, may it grow more than ninefold.
Whichever female cattle conceive, may they give us
plenty of milk.
Whatever we put on the threshing ground, may it not be
wasted [i.e., may all the grain reach the store
without mishap].
O God, may the cow or young buffalo be impregnated by
the male just after getting its second teeth.
Just before getting its fourth teeth, may its calf walk.
May the house be filled with children, and may the pen
be filled with cattle.
Let everything be good. *Hau hau!*

The prayer is uttered in this fashion three times. At the end of the second recital the men shout *"hau hau"* twice, and at the end of the third they shout it at least three times, in expression of their happiness.

As the final words of this prayer are uttered, each man stoops beside the stream, still with his salt in one hand and pot in the other. He mixes the salt in the running water and catches some of this saline solution in the pot.

The leader then takes his pot of brine and pours it into the pit that he dug. The other men follow suit. Then all the cows and oxen, but not the buffaloes, are driven to the pits to drink. When the animals have emptied a pit, more water is thrown in and further salt added without additional ceremony. Only after the cows and oxen wander away from these pits are the buffaloes finally allowed their drink of brine. A few of the men then refill their pots with water and pour it over the backs of the animals "to cool them."

When this phase of the proceedings is completed, each man fills his pot with water again and then sits down in the grass nearby. At this point one or two Todas, who have been waiting for this moment, come forward and approach each Badaga in turn. The Badagas give most of the salt remaining in their baskets to these Toda friends.

After this, one of the Badagas goes to a dewberry bush and cuts off a branch. This is regarded as a ritual, and is done with a small knife made by

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
AWSO Badaga AWSO

Kotas especially for this purpose. Sprigs from the branch are distributed, and every man places a small sprig on top of the salt that remains in his basket. A branch is also cut from the hill gooseberry and distributed in exactly the same way.

The celebrants now return to their homes, again led by the man from the Great House. Other male members of each family may follow this party, driving the buffaloes and carrying the hoes. Each man in the ceremonial party, however, has to carry his own potful of water, his iron rod, and his basket (which now contains a little salt, the two twigs mentioned, and also a remaining piece of the *'hubbe* that has otherwise been used as a brush). As the men walk they chant *"hau hau,"* an expression of their happiness. When they reach the hamlet they shout *"ki:i:hi,"* which means, "It is finished." Then the party splits up. Each member goes to his calves and gives them a taste of the salty water he has brought back. After that he is ready to enter his house.

There is still more ritual to be performed, however, for the man must enter his house in a prescribed way. As he comes toward the entrance, the oldest woman in the family stands just inside the inner room, leaning out through its doorway in such a way that she can also see through the entrance to the house. As soon as she sees the man coming across the front yard, she asks him three times in succession, "Have all the cattle drunk salt well?" He answers "Yes" each time. During this interchange the man continues walking but his pace is measured so that he will not enter the house until he has said "Yes" for the third time. On reaching the doorway he is careful to step auspiciously across the threshold with the right foot first.

Once inside the house he stands the iron rod against the wall near the door, and then puts the basket of salt on top of the hole in the floor where grain is usually crushed and where the salt was powdered earlier. The woman then comes from the inner room, takes the three sprigs from this basket, and hangs them from the ceiling of the outer room. She carries the basket to the inner room, which is a kitchen and dining room, and she uses up whatever salt remains in cooking a meal. During the whole performance of the salt-giving ceremony she should use no other salt than this. (Nowadays she has generally finished cooking by the time the man returns home, and so just adds a pinch of his salt to the prepared meal.)

The meal which is served at this time to the members of the household differs from ordinary morning meals in certain respects. The man who has represented the family in the salt-giving ceremony is served before everyone else; ordinarily this would only occur when no other adult male members of the family were present. Furthermore, he is served in the outer room of the house, although meals are otherwise eaten in the inner room, where they are cooked. He eats butter first of all; the rice and vegetable curry follow. Afterwards he must wash his hands in cold water; usually he washes in hot.

During the afternoon each of the celebrants carries his pot of water to the cattle pen and there pours it on the ground. Again the man from the

121 the stream, the cattle shed, and the hearth. Furthermore, the participants in
796 this ceremony do all they can to insure that they are in a state of purity,
and that they do nothing to cause a mishap during this particular day.

Let us now examine these points in more detail. The requirements of
783 ritual purity and bodily cleanliness are a *sine qua non* for the performance
of any ceremony. If a man does not approach the gods with the knowledge
that he has done all that he can to be in a pure state, he has little hope that
115 his prayers will be answered. In pre-British days, when the salt had to be
437 purchased in the plains below, it received special treatment from the mo-
439 ment of purchase onward to insure that it would not become polluted
783 before the ceremony. The men who were to carry the salt up the mountain
slopes were not to carry anything else; contact with ordinary foodstuffs
would pollute this particular salt. The annual trading expeditions were
normally timed so as to fall a few weeks before the salt-giving ceremony.
Nowadays a Badaga simply buys his own salt in the town market and
brings it home without special ritual precautions.

High in the roof of each cattle shed are shelves on which various dairy
231 articles are stored. The man who brings the salt home is supposed to take it
778 straight to the cattle shed and place it on one of these shelves; he must not
783 bring it directly into his house, even though he will later have to do so
when the ceremony is about to begin. It is felt that the salt would become
polluted in the house if it were brought into an unpurified room where
sexual activity has occurred. The cattle shed, though not considered a temple
like the Toda dairy, is a pure and sacred place because milk is stored
783 there. When the salt is finally brought into each purified house for powder-
ing, it is whisked around the mortar with the help of a freshly cut twig
796 of wild *'hubbe* (also used for loosening any salt that remains on the bottom
(824) of the basket). The Badagas have two kinds of broom, one for indoor use
and one for outside; but both are considered impure because of what they
(412) have come in contact with, and so cannot be used for sweeping the salt
(783) around while it is being powdered. The used part of the *'hubbe* branch is
thrown away after this, and the unused remainder is placed on top of the
salt. From the time of purchase onward, this salt is always carried in a
special basket kept only for this purpose.

783 It is not only the salt that must be kept in a ritually pure state; the
man selected to perform the ceremony on behalf of each household is also
under certain restrictions. From the day of the new moon until after the
salt has been given to the cattle this man must not shave, have sexual re-
lations, cut his finger or toe nails, or stay overnight anywhere other than
in his own home. By observing all these prohibitions he is believed to build
(765) up a state of personal purity. (Were a man to cut his hair and shave, it
would suggest he had recently attended a funeral and was still in the
inauspicious state of mourning for a deceased relative.) The culmination
of this spiritual preparation comes on the night preceding the ceremony,
when he must sleep alone on a sack on the earthen floor, wearing cotton
and without any other bedding.

(356) Early the following morning the house has to be purified too. After the

there. (The Todas are the only group in this region who habitually wipe the rectum with green leaves.)

2.11. The nose is cleaned by holding it between the index finger and thumb of the left hand, and blowing the mucus onto the ground. With babies, a relative sucks the nose and then spits the mucus out.

No one should spit on the floor of the house or blow his nose there. Well-mannered people do not spit on the yard outside either, but might instead spit on the grass of the village green provided nobody else was nearby. Furthermore, people do not spit in a temple out of respect for the god; nor on a funeral ground. Two types of spittoons, nowadays of brass, are kept in the house: a *kuplike* for men and an *uggu kiṇḍi* for men and old women. The latter vessel must be kept in the outer room, and although men do use the vessel they will not touch it. The men's spittoon, *kuplike*, must not be used by women, but may be carried into the inner, more sacred room of the house.

Spitting is an act that normally accompanies the chewing of tobacco. It is charged with a good deal of social significance. Thus if a woman spits on the ground near an enemy, this means: "I don't like you — go away!" A man will spit at an enemy when abusing him, but if he otherwise spits in someone's direction it means he is going to fight with that person. If during a ceremony a boy is staring at a girl in the crowd, she either opens her mouth to show that she will accept his advances, or spits on the ground to show she does not. Until the nineteenth century one of the severest punishments for a woman was to make her drink water from an earthen spittoon in public.

2.12. Badagas clean the teeth by rubbing them with charcoal and then rinsing the mouth. Those who have settled in the Waina:ḍ (the Waina:ḍ Gaudas) make a black powder for cleaning the teeth, by frying up the husks of grain with salt. A proverb wisely admonishes that, "The teeth are spoiled by not picking with a stick."

2.13. In early days Badaga women rubbed butter into their hair and bodies (as Toda women still do); but they used no scents. In those times women had no hair brushes, and so they would take the prickly seed pod of the thorn-apple, dry it out, and use it instead. Now hairbrushes are universally used.

Women regularly remove their armpit and pubic hair nowadays, with the help of a special soap sold in the market which causes the

243 placed in small heaps, and burned when dry. Plows used in soil prep-
(407) aration were of a general type presently used in southern India. Some
(175) doubtlessly had a metal strip attached to the share, but Ouchterlony
(1848: 31) stated that the share was "almost invariably a piece of
pointed wood, of a tough description, hardened in the fire, and not
shod with iron, or any other metal." Plowing was performed by two
(492) methods. In the first, a lead team of yoked cattle drawing a plow was
followed by five or six similar teams drawing plows. After plows
scraped a single furrow, paralleled furrows were formed by forcing the
(492) cattle to pull plows in lines paralleling the first. When the other
method was used, a single team of yoked cattle pulled a plow over a
field as many as five times. During each replowing, furrows were
(462) crossed. After the men had finished the plowing, women and children
(857) with small hoes worked over the soil, broke up clods, removed weeds,
and piled them in small heaps. After the weeds were burned, the ashes
were scattered over the ground. Cattle manure from cattle pens was
mixed with community trash, loaded into baskets, and carried to fields.
After being broadcast, the fertilizer was worked into the soil through
another plowing or with hoes. Men broadcast seeds, or planted seeds,
plants, and seed potatoes (later 1800s) in rows. Sown seeds were
covered by a last plowing or light hoeing. Women and children usually
weeded the fields two or more times. To speed this process up, rows
(592) of weeders sometimes worked cooperatively. Harvesting was performed
(412) by all family members, and sickles were the main harvesting implements.
Bundles of straw with grain or baskets loaded with grain heads were
carried as head loads to threshing floors. Temporary threshing floors

243 were constructed in the fields, but there were also well cowdunged permanent threshing floors within communities. To thresh out grain, cattle were muzzled, lined up, tied together and to a central post, (462) and then driven around in circles over straw and grain. Women, however, used threshing sticks to thresh out grain on courtyards fronting houses. (251) Sun-dried grain was stored away in large conical baskets plastered inside and out with cowdung, but finger millet was often kept in pits.

241 407 In 1908 plows were still being used, but by 1930 they were no longer in general use (Francis 1908: 166; Carl 1930: 32). The abandonment of plows resulted from the need for deeper soil turnover and ridging in potato cultivation. This was touched upon by Robertson (1875: 26), who stated that "as the native plough cannot ridge the land, the preparation of the soil, except the mere stirring and loosening, is all done by manual labor, and the cost of putting in the crop is much higher than it need be were a mouldboard plough used; . . . ." Three Swedish moldboard plows were sent to the Nilgiris in 1882-83, and a Badaga purchased one after a plowing exhibit at Ketti (Madras Department of Revenue Settlement and Agriculture 1884: 19; M.D. of R.S. and A. 1886: 6). However, Badagas never adopted moldboard plows. If they had done so, it is likely that plows would still be used. In 1908 244 412 potato plots were prepared through use of digging forks, introduced by the English, and hoes (Francis 1908: 167-168). During World War I, when potato production was greatly increased, the borrowed English digging fork rapidly replaced the plow. There is a distinct possibility that varied hoe-forks now used by Badagas were locally developed in that

244 period (Figure 15).
412 In present dry field crop production land occasionally remains unterraced, but is more often shallowly terraced. Many farmers are
241 now, by requirement of the Madras Government, hewing out slopes to
(1660) form horizontal croplands on tiered terraces (Plate X, C). Dry fields frequently remain unenclosed. When land left in fallow for some time is again to be cultivated, vegetation will first be removed and burned in small piles.

244 In preparing ground for potatoes, men turn the soil with digging
(462) forks. After about two or three weeks, clods are broken by women and
(857) children. Both blunt and forked sides of hoe-forks are used in this task. Undesirable stones and weeds are removed at the same time. Stones are utilized in terrace or wall construction, and ashes from weeds burned in piles are scattered over the land. Manure and compost brought in by women, bullock carts, or trucks are scattered over the
(435) soil. Badagas sometimes purchased buffalo-dung from the Todas. After fertilizer has been worked into the soil with hoes or hoe-forks, paralleled potato ridges are constructed with similar implements. As this is a hard task, men often assist. Men, women, and children do the planting. A small amount of chemical fertilizer is included with each seed potato. At least two weedings are carried out through use
(462) of smaller hoes, hoe-forks, and small weeding-hoes. Women and children
(857) usually perform this task, and at the same time they mound the ridges. The first mounding aids in keeping spreading roots covered, and the
(592) second helps protect the plant bases from strong monsoon winds. Most
(251) family members work during the busy harvest season. After tubers dug

244 up with hoes and hoe-forks have been dried in the sun, they are removed
251 in baskets to houses, storage huts, or awaiting trucks.

When grain is to be sown, soil is turned over by women using
243 large- and medium-sized hoe-forks. Fields to be planted with grain
462 are infrequently manured, and chemical fertilizers are seldom applied. If manure or fertilizer is used, it will be spread over the field and worked in. Grain broadcast over fields by men is then worked into the soil with hoes or hoe-forks. In the eastern Nilgiris, amaranth, mustard, finger millet, and Italian millet are still sown together. Amaranth, mustard, Italian millet, and little millet are also mixed. Barley, buckwheat, and wheat are usually sown separately. Women and
[412] children seldom weed grain fields more than once. Sickles are standard harvesting implements, and women usually remove the grain heads.

Varied processing of grain heads depends upon the grain har-
243 vested. Little millet is cut near the base of the stalk. Grains are then trodden out by cattle moving about a central post, as in former times (Plate X,D). Threshing-floors may be temporarily located in
243 fields, or permanently near communities and on community courtyards.
251 Threshed little millet dried out on courtyards for several days is winnowed and packed away in sacks or wooden chests. Finger millet grain heads cut off plants are tightly packed into sacks. After sack openings have been closed with bound string, the finger millet is stored away in warm parts of houses for four or five days. During this time the grain turns dark brown, but should not be permitted to blacken. When the correct color is reached, grain heads are removed to threshing floors. The treaded heads are saved and dried, so that remaining grains